



**Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Health Affairs)
TRICARE Management Activity
Acquisition Management and Support**

TRICARE ACQUISITION PRACTICE (TAP)

**TAP 54-01, Rev. 000
18 September 01**

SUBJECT: COMMON LETTERS

References: None

1. PURPOSE:

To establish responsibilities and procedures for drafting, coordinating, distributing and logging common letters.

2. APPLICABILITY:

This TAP applies to all personnel involved in the preparation and distribution of common letters.

3. DEFINITIONS:

A "common letter" is defined as any written correspondence, to multiple contractors, that has the same content and is used by all contracting officers to convey information, data, or request a response. Common letters may or may not be in response to a contractor's inquiry. Common letters primarily address technical and/or administrative information regarding TMA contract, but are not limited to these areas. Common letters do not provide contractual direction.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

4.1. The Director, Contract Management (CM) or a contracting officer are the only individuals authorized to sign a common letter. The individual who signs a common letter is ultimately responsible for the language contained in the letter.

4.2. The CM administrative assistant is responsible for scheduling coordination meetings, preparing a letter for signature, and distributing/logging a common letter.

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5. PROCEDURES:

5.1. A functional area other than CM (e.g., Programs Requirements, Medical Benefits & Reimbursement Systems) usually initiates the subject matter of a common letter. The requestor shall prepare a common letter draft and submit this draft to the CM administrative assistant.

5.2. A common letter should be issued within two (2) days after receipt of the requestor's draft.

5.3. The CM administrative assistant will schedule a coordination meeting with CM management and the contracting officers to discuss the requestor's draft. The CM administrative assistant will provide a copy of the requestor's draft to all attendees. The requestor does not usually attend; however, if there are significant concerns the requestor may participate.

5.4. Meeting participants determine common letter content, signature level, and need for legal review.

5.4.1. If the letter's content is determined to be out of contract scope, the letter is not a common letter and it is given to the appropriate contracting officer(s) for resolution.

5.4.2. If required, a contracting officer will coordinate legal review.

5.4.3. The common letter language is intended to be finalized in the coordination meeting.

5.4.3.1. If a common letter cannot be finalized, it is returned to the requestor for additional information.

5.4.3.2. When the requestor returns a revised draft to the CM administrative assistant, another coordination meeting is scheduled. If necessary, the requestor may participate in this additional meeting.

5.5. When the common letter language is finalized, the CM administrative assistant prepares the final letter for signature.

5.6. The Director, CM signs common letters that provide clarification or general information. A contracting officer signs common letters identified as directional.

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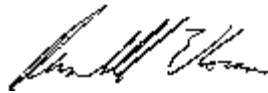
5.7. The CM administrative assistant ensures appropriate distribution of a common letter.

5.7.1. An original common letter shall be sent to the required contractors. Copies shall be sent to the requestor, Contracting Officer Representatives, and Lead Agent ACOs. Copies shall be placed in the contract file and common letters central file.

5.7.2. A common letter shall be distributed within one (1) working day after execution.

5.7.3. The executed common letter shall be provided to the Contract Operations Division administrative assistant for inclusion on the HA/TMA Intranet website. Common letters can be accessed at <http://intra-prod/> by selecting "TMA Information" and then "ID letters."

5.8. The CM administrative assistant will update the common letter log which lists all common letters issued and is organized numerically by letter number. The log is an Excel spreadsheet located on the shared drive at S:\CM\Common Letters. The current file is entitled "2001 Common Letter Log.xls".



Randall E. Koran
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ENCLOSURES

1. Common Letter Log (Sample) (1 page)